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# 'I Wanted To Give My Life To Help Humanity Advance'

By Sally Ann Stewart  
Journalist

When the Central Intelligence Agency expands its Langley headquarters in a few years, leveling part of a nearby pine grove, it might change Margaret Scattergood's view. But it won't change her outlook.

For 4 of her 87 years, Scattergood has worked for social reform organizations and labor unions whose political philosophies oppose the CIA. Today, the tiny Quaker woman is just as staunchly disapproving of her nearest neighbor and co tenant as she was during her activist days.

Scattergood doesn't even like to say that she lives next door to the CIA. She prefers to describe her home as "at the beginning of Georgetown Place."

"We bought this land in 1923 and the CIA didn't come out here until 1949," Scattergood said. "I don't want to be connected with the CIA."

Scattergood and a friend, Florence Calvert Thorne, jointly purchased the 10-acre property 14 years ago for \$25,000 during the Great Depression. "It wasn't cheap, but Scattergood pointed out that today "you couldn't even touch this property for a few hundred thousand dollars." The 10-acre estate includes three family-sized houses, a barn, a carriage-house-turned-garage and a children's play house.

In 1911, the U.S. government bought the house from Scattergood and Congress passed a law allowing the two women to live in their home until the last one dies, when the property will be used by the government. The CIA moved in next door in 1941 and Thorne died in the late-1950s, Scattergood said.

Scattergood began her career in political and social reform during an era when most women were limited to accepting housewife and mother roles.

When she graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1917 at the age of 23, Scattergood went to work for the American Friends Service Committee in Mareuil-le-Port, France, helping resettled wine growers who fled the German invasion of World War I. After the war ended, the farmers returned to their destroyed land to rebuild their vineyards.

"All their homes were gone and they were living in cellars," Scattergood remembered. "So the men in the American Friends Service Committee worked to build houses, and we women opened a store where we sold the French peasants supplies they needed for below cost. This is where we sold beds and materials for making bedding and clothing and other things they needed."

That was before women in the U.S. secured the right to vote but Scattergood said she never considered herself a women's liberation pioneer.

"I never thought about women's rights and that didn't influence me," she said. "I'm Quaker and I simply wanted to give my life in some way to help humanity advance."

When Scattergood returned to the U.S. in 1928, she volunteered to work for the American Federation of Labor in Washington. A year later, she became an employee of the first labor union's research staff.

"The research service for trade unions enabled them to know important facts about the industry in which they were engaged," Scattergood said. "When collective bargaining took place, union members could use those facts to their bargaining advantage and it meant that the people who worked had a chance to enjoy the benefits and that the profits could be equitably divided."

Scattergood's father was a textile dye manufacturer in Chester, Pa., who opposed labor unions as firmly as his daughter supported them. But that didn't sway her from devoting 25 years to the AFL before it merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations and became the AFL-CIO.

"Oh, my father hated labor unions, just hated them," she said. "But I went to college and made my mind up for myself."

Scattergood said she realizes that corruption breeds at the top level of union management, but believes that union benefits outweigh the disadvantages.



Margaret Scattergood, seated at center, and friends take a break from their work in Mareuil, France.

"Union officials certainly are no different from other human beings," Scattergood said. "There's corruption in the unions just like there's corruption in government. Even regardless of that, labor unions do represent a great body of Americans who, without labor unions, would have to accept the conditions their employers gave them."

Once, during the early riot- and strike-ridden years of union organizing, Scattergood recalled, she was talking on the telephone to a local union leader who wanted advice on an upcoming collective bargaining session. Scattergood told the local union leader to cooperate as much as possible with the employer, and then an AFL officer passed by her office door.

"I asked the man on the phone to hold on and I asked the officer, 'It is true, isn't it, that we cooperate with employers?' And he answered, 'only when they beat it out of us.'"

Scattergood retired from the AFL in 1952, after 25 years. Since then, most of her time has been spent traveling through Europe, continuing to aid the American Friends Service Committee, and working for a McLean racial unity organization, Neighbors for a Better Community.

At 67, Margaret Scattergood isn't about to give up. She spends four hours every day with her personal secretary compiling her memoirs, and her afternoons are reserved for studying international affairs.

"I'm particularly interested now in avoiding World War III," Scattergood said. "I think it is possible. I'm hoping to find ways I can help in de-

veloping negotiations between nations to replace war. Collective bargaining between nations is really the only thing that makes sense."

Technically, Scattergood's house and land belong to the Government Services Administration. A GSA spokesman said there are no plans to turn the property over to the CIA, although the agency could gain ownership upon Scattergood's death.

The CIA is in the early stages of planning its future expansion, and Lilla Richards, president of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations, said three CIA planners presented preliminary plans at a November federation meeting.

"Her (Scattergood's) house would not be affected but there might be a visual impact," Richards said. "They showed us aerial photographs, and the new building is going to be between the existing building and Margaret's house."

The CIA expansion plans call for a seven-story, one-million-square-foot building to be constructed on the agency's property next door to Scattergood's home of almost 50 years. CIA spokeswoman Kathy Pherson said the new building will not be visible from Scattergood's property.

"Apparently, there is nothing in the plan that would intrude on her view," Pherson said. "But this is all in the preliminary stages. We haven't secured the funding for the project or hired an architect."

Pherson said the CIA will present a formal preliminary plan to the National Capital Planning Commission during the first week of January, after which Congress will be asked to appropriate the building funds.



French peasants gather around American Friends Service Committee delivery truck.

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# Activist Asks, 'What More Can I Do?'

By William Ruberry

Special to the Journal

Margaret Scattergood of McLean isn't stopping to take bows after receiving Fairfax County's Human Rights Award.

For one thing, she's far too busy with her work to pause and reap praise for her achievements.

From the small garage-turned-office at her home, Scattergood launches her campaign to promote what she calls a "friendly mingling" between members of the community.

"She never stops," says Lilla Richards, former McLean Civic Association president, noting that Scattergood no sooner completes one project than she is pursuing another, continually asking, "What more can I do?"

Yet even if Scattergood weren't so busy, she would still shun the accolades.

"All I want to do is work in a very modest way," she says, quickly mentioning others who deserve the award more than she and dismissing her contribution as that of an "office girl."

She accepted the award, presented by the county's Human Rights Commission, on behalf of the Neighbors for a Better Community, a civic group for which she is secretary, because "we've done it by working together."

Reared in a Philadelphia family of

Quakers, Scattergood graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1917. She joined the American Federation of Labor in 1926 as a researcher. Through her efforts, a "factual basis" for negotiations was created, which she says enabled labor to explain in black-and-white why higher wages or better conditions were needed.

Scattergood moved to McLean in 1933, when land sold for \$5 an acre, with her friend and AFL colleague Florence Calvert Thorne, a descendant of the Calverts who established Maryland as a colony of religious freedom in 1634.

As she points to the Calvert family crest on the wall of her home, Scattergood relates their history, as if this emblem were a source of strength for her commitment to what she calls "human values."

After leaving the labor movement in 1952, Scattergood became involved in a variety of community projects, many through her church, the Langley Hill Friends Meeting.

Since 1968, she has been active in Neighbors for a Better Community, formed in 1963 "to foster harmony and cooperation" between local black and white communities. This longstanding dedication earned her the award.

The organization seeks to educate citizens about civic problems and works with them to develop solutions.



Margaret Scattergood

Scattergood and the Neighbors organization also are concerned about the fate of Odrick's Corner, a black community that is threatened by a proposed interchange at Springhill Road and the Dulles Access Road.

Officials plan a "partial intersection," which Scattergood says will not by itself prove harmful. But she says highway consultants know from past experience that a "partial intersection" inevitably develops into a "full intersection." According to Scattergood, such a development would "scatter the community," settling the

stage for serious community problems.

Along with the Rev. Ronald Winters at Shiloh Baptist Church on Springhill Road, Scattergood and the Neighbors organization are fighting to save Odrick's Corner from extinction.

Broadening black participation in the local community center also concerns Scattergood, for she believes increased interaction between the races creates a basis for understanding and cooperation.

Race relations in this country, "developed out of a bad situation," she says, but, when whites realize the black community would enrich the white community and blacks overcome their reluctance to work with whites, the way will be cleared for true progress.

"This organization has shown how splendidly the two groups can work together," she says, pointing to Neighbors' integrated membership.

Though Scattergood focuses her efforts on local problems, she does not entirely restrict herself to them. One of her major interests lies in a program she labels "education for responsible citizenship," which helps citizens of developing countries determine their own futures and the futures of their nations.

—American NewsService